

# 2008

## *Louisiana*

# Agricultural Statistics

*Compiled by*  
The Louisiana Field Office  
of  
The United States Department of Agriculture  
National Agricultural Statistics Service

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The support and cooperation of Louisiana's farmers, ranchers and agribusinesses are the foundation for accurate and reliable agricultural statistics. The entire staff of the National Agricultural Statistics Service's Louisiana Field Office, along with the enumerators of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) who collect the data, would like to express our great appreciation to the many individuals and operations that provided the survey data to make this publication and the estimates it contains possible.

The 2008 Louisiana Agricultural Statistics bulletin provides a wealth of economic, crop, livestock and weather data for the state as a whole. Additionally, for major commodities, the bulletin provides 2008 parish level estimates.

Funding for the publication of 2008 Louisiana Agricultural Statistics was provided by the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry and the Louisiana State University Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness.

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In cooperation with:  
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The USDA-National Agricultural Statistics Service, Louisiana Field Office publishes the Louisiana Agricultural Statistics bulletin through cooperative agreements between the USDA - National Agricultural Statistics Service's Louisiana Field Office and the Louisiana Department of Agricultural and Forestry. Louisiana State University AgCenter and Extension Service and Southern University Extension have provided tremendous assistance in compiling data within this report. Enclosed in this publication are parish and state level estimates for specified agricultural commodities in this state.

Hurricanes Gustav and Ike ripped through the state last fall devastating crops in their paths. The cotton crop was one of the hardest hit in the north central and north eastern part of the state. Rice producers were not able to get most of their ratoon crop harvested while corn and sugarcane growers faced substantial wind and water damages. Soybean producers reported notable differences in yield with high moisture content or a sharp decline in quality. The sweet potato crop was virtually wiped out by the heavy rains and flooding. Pecan producers lost most of their crop including a large number of trees. Livestock damages with some losses were reported as a result of the storms.

Producers saw slightly lesser prices for their grains as energy became less of a factor as the world recession continued to take its toll on the US economy. Oil prices continued to decline through most of 2008, therefore, decreasing the demand for ethanol as an alternative fuel.

We thank all Louisianans who have participated in the March, June, September, December Agricultural Surveys, Monthly Crop Yield surveys, January and July Cattle Surveys, Cotton Objective Yield Survey, January and July Sheep and Goat Surveys along with a number of other surveys conducted on an annual basis. Producers were under tremendous amount of stress making decisions on whether

or not to plant crops or which crops to plant depending on land conditions and crop prices. USDA-NASS, Louisiana Field Office was able to provide valuable information to producers during critical decision-making periods because of your cooperation on the annual and monthly surveys that are conducted by this office.

Data included in this publication represent numerous agricultural, economic and chemical use surveys completed by a multitude of Louisiana producers over the years. Without the cooperation of agricultural producers, agribusiness and private industry these data series would not be possible. Thank you again for your participation.

The Louisiana Field Office is a state office within the National Agricultural Statistics Service which is the agency charged with providing agricultural statistics for the United States Department of Agriculture.

Sincerely,

Nathan L. Crisp

Director



*Message from Commissioner Strain*

In 2008, Louisiana agri-businesses generated more than \$28 billion in food and fiber products and services to the state's economy. The value-added from the food and fiber sectors amount to more than \$9.1 billion to our economy.

Louisiana commodities range from sweet potatoes, crawfish, cattle, catfish, rice, cotton, soybeans, sugarcane and a prosperous forestry industry.

Unfortunately, Louisiana agricultural producers suffered tremendous losses due to hurricanes Gustav and Ike. Based on LSU AgCenter statistics, economic losses amounted to more than 76 percent of the cotton, 73 percent of the sweet potato and 10 percent of the sugarcane crop due to the storms. Other commodities suffered significant losses as well.

The family farm plays a significant role in creating economic security for our country and provides the nation and world with safe food and renewable energy. In 2007, 243,000 Louisiana workers earned more than \$4.5 billion from the food and fiber sectors. More than nine percent of our workers are employed in agriculture.

Maintaining a strong agricultural base is vital to Louisiana's economy. In many of Louisiana's rural parishes, agriculture is the major economic driver. The LSU AgCenter reported that approximately 55 percent of Louisiana parishes are considered non-metropolitan or rural. These parishes contribute more than \$31 billion to our overall economy and 15 percent of the state's gross domestic product.

The production of agricultural commodities affects the economy of every parish in the state. We must always remember that the preservation of our farm economy is not only a matter of economic development but also our national security.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Strain". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mike Strain, DVM  
Commissioner